

# JAMES THOMAS AND CLARISSA VAN WAGONER PYPER

James Thomas Pyper, son of James Munro Pyper and Mary Ann Barton. Born April



2, 1877, in Nephi, Juab County, Utah. Married Clarissa Van Wagoner February 7, 1900, in Midway. Temple marriage April 5, 1900, Salt Lake Temple. Died April 14, 1956, LDS Hospital, Salt Lake City.

Clarissa Van Wagoner, daughter of John Van Wagoner Sr., and Margaret Ann Faucett. Born September 26, 1880, in Midway.

James was the youngest of five children: Mary Alice Barton, Rose Ellen, John Barton, Clara Ann and James Thomas Pyper. When he was twenty-three months old his mother died, leaving a sad and motherless family. Before long his father married Nancy Jane Caldwell, and she became an angel of mercy to the family and the only mother James ever knew. He loved her dearly. She became the mother of eight sons and one daughter of her own.

After this marriage, the family moved to Fairview, Sanpete County, where they lived until James was twelve years old, then they came to make their home in Midway, where they remained until after the marriage of James and Clarissa in 1900. The father and mother and all of the children except John and wife, Sarah, James and wife, Clarissa and George, a younger brother, moved into Taylorsville, Alberta, Canada, when that country was opened for the settlement of the Latter-day Saints, and where his father, James Munro, died and was buried in 1903.

Clarissa's parents were original pioneers in Midway, and had a home in the Old Fort, as did also their parents, John Halmah and Clarissa Tappen Van Wagoner, and John McKey and Mary Ann (Aunt Polly) Shelton Faucett. She was the sixth child in a family of fourteen children.

She had a busy life, learning the many things that a woman of that generation needed to know in a large family. She worked in Park City for the George Smith

family when their mother died, and helped cook for the railroad men when her father took a contract to furnish men and equipment for the building of the railroad through Echo Canyon.

She was a beautiful young lady, with dark hair and snapping black eyes, though she was small in stature, standing just five feet, three inches tall, and James was hard put to win her for his wife, though he always teased her that she had to ask his mother for him.

They enjoyed a fruitful and happy life, becoming a "backbone" family in the community. James was a splendid farmer, and first leased and then bought a hillside and river-bottom farm, which by dint of his brain and his two hands, he cleared of timber, brush, and boulders, filled in the swales and leveled the high places, and brought into wonderful productivity. He loved farming and stock-raising. He began some of the first crop-rotation practices in the valley; he produced fat cattle and hogs; kept a farm flock of chickens, grew wonderful crops of potatoes and truck garden.

James was a member of the Town Board several terms, Director of the Midway Irrigation Company, County Assessor, manager of the Amusement Hall, Ward Clerk in the Midway First Ward for twenty-three years, active in the 96th Quorum of Seventy for many years, served a mission to the Eastern States in 1925, and was always participating in what had to be done, from building roads, fences and bridges, and digging ditches to dancing a fancy quadrille. Clara worked in all the Church organizations, being teacher, chorister, Relief Society counselor to Sister Mary A. Johnson, working on the Genealogy Committee and many other Church activities and also active in the Daughters of the Pioneers.

Their home was a gathering place for the young people of the Ward. Every missionary who left the town for a mission was given a fine dinner and at least five dollars from them, and another dinner when he returned home. Every newly-wed couple was entertained and feasted by them. Every school teacher was especially invited for special dinners. Their hospitality was known far and wide by old and young; relatives, friends and even strangers. No one ever went away hungry from their home. The smallest event was used as an excuse for a

party or a picnic. They dearly loved people and quickly made friends.

James helped plow the first furrow around the foundation of the new First Ward Chapel, begun soon after the wards were divided in 1903, and he continued to work on that chapel until it was finished and dedicated.

In 1938 James' health failed and he was unable to run his farm. Hoping to still be useful, they moved to Salt Lake City to work in the Temple, and there they did endowments and sealings for 3500 people and then they stopped keeping track of the names. His health became more frail and finally he was unable to continue labor in the Temple and had to retire even from that activity.

They finally bought them a small home in Pleasant Grove, where they went to live. It was here that James spent his last days and to the very last he beautified and made it produce, raising raspberries, strawberries, tomatoes, cucumbers, fruits and flowers.

For many years he was an invalid and his faithful wife cared for him tenderly and lovingly. He was buried in the Midway Cemetery after a beautiful service in the old home ward he loved so much and devoted so much service to.

Clara still lives in the little home in Pleasant Grove. She still goes to the Temple each week and faithfully attends to her duties in the Ward.

Children of James Thomas and Clarissa Van Wagoner Pyper:

Ralph Delos Pyper, married Ruth Jenkins, parents of five sons;

Jennie Luella Pyper, married George W. Johnson, parents of three sons, two daughters;

Thora Pearl Pyper, deceased;

Clara Edwards, married Joseph Parley Edwards, parents of four sons, one daughter;

Alda Lavell Pyper, married LeRoy Carsey, married Harry Charlton, childless;

Ray Van Pyper, married Ruth North, parents of three sons, four daughters;

Alma Leland Pyper, married Blanche Chivell; married Dorene Root. Father of two sons, one daughter;

Chloe Pyper, married Earl Finlayson; parents of six sons, two daughters;

Clyde Pyper, married Marjorie Casper, parents of one son and one daughter;

George Arthur Pyper, married Dorothy Ruth Young, one daughter; married Max-

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Mima Maud Pyper, married Lincoln Rasband, two sons and four daughters.

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MIDWAY BIOGRAPHIES

781

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